

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH: DDCI
SUBJECT: Status of CIA Participation in the
NRO Staff

1. The NRO staff is dominated by Air Force officers detailed to Secretary McMillan's office, and we have all wished for a more broadly based decision making group for the NRP. At our NRO budget review session of 22 October 1963, you directed McMillan to include additional CIA people in his NRO staff. It is my understanding that he countered several days later with three specific needs which you told him in no uncertain terms were unresponsive to your request. You then directed General Carter and me to have a detailed meeting on NRO staffing, which was held on 7 November 1963 in McMillan's office. John Bross joined us but Fubini was not present.

25X1A 2. The meeting was in two parts: descriptions of the various NRO components and possible participation roles for CIA personnel. [redacted] described the NRO staff and Programs A, C and D (see attached) in extremely brief form. Colonel Ledford described Program B (OEA) and I gave McMillan a comprehensive view of DD/S&T, in which he showed great interest as a place in which to accomplish NRO business. However, he was disturbed and continues to be so, according to Kiefer, that he cannot see how he can task the components of DD/S&T in a "line way" to his own satisfaction. I suggested that he let me know what he felt needed to be done and I would arrange it.

3. We then turned to specific staffing requests, after reducing the group to McMillan, Colonel Strand (his aide), Carter, Wheeler and Bross. Brock put forward the following specific suggestions for CIA assignees:

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a. A CIA contracts man to work for General Greer in Los Angeles to handle the black CORONA contracts which he intends to transfer to Program A. We all agreed that this added very little to CIA participation in the NRO staff and this was really a service to General Greer if he is successful in acquiring CORONA.

b. A CIA officer who could support McMillan on aircraft operations in the NRO staff. (Colonel Strand has been trying to recruit unilaterally [redacted] Ledford's Chief of Operations, for this job.) General Carter inquired what contribution this would make in view of Ledford's integrated capability. It became apparent through discussion that this man would serve as a check on operational planning developed for the Special Group by Ledford.

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c. A technical man to work for General Greer in Los Angeles in his Advanced Projects office. This post is now held by Captain Frank German (USN) and is responsible for what advanced planning is done on satellite systems. McMillan indicated that he is not satisfied with German's performance and would be willing to groom a CIA man as his replacement. I suspect, but cannot be certain, that he would like [redacted] for this job. [redacted] would be good but his assignment would leave DD/S&T without its coagulated point for its own growing collection development program. We inquired at some length why the NRO advanced planning activity was centered under General Greer rather than the NRO staff, and were told that: (1) it required a contracting capability, (2) it should be in the midst of the other satellite work, and (3) he wanted to keep the NRO staff small. These arguments were not convincing, but we should give serious thought to staffing such a spot if it is properly located.

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5. I then inquired how Gene Kiefer fitted into this structure. McMillan was quite candid in saying that NRO decisions were made between himself and General Martin, and readily agreed that this left Kiefer between two "do-it-yourselfers". I suggested that perhaps Kiefer ought to become the Chief of Staff when Martin leaves (summer '64), but McMillan rejected this promptly.

6. McMillan then tabled an open preference for Air Force officers who have served with CIA as the only workable way to inject CIA thinking into NRO affairs. Carter pointed out that such officers serve tours at CIA so as to bring flying talents to CIA and seldom develop the deep appreciation for intelligence needs that a career CIA officer would bring to the staff. McMillan pointed out that he had no control over CIA (or NSA) people on this NRO staff and indicated that he should write their fitness reports, with which I agreed.

7. I judged this meeting to represent an all time low in NRO/CIA relations, and this view was amplified considerably by Carter and Brown. It was made abundantly clear then and later (through Kiefer) that McMillan has no intention of establishing a truly joint staff. Under the circumstances, I am most reluctant to send additional people to join Kiefer in their sterile role until a satisfactory understanding is reached on the over-all NRO problem. I am convinced that it is quite unrealistic to expect Kiefer and widely distributed and subordinated CIA staff members to create a peaceful re-orientation in the face of clearly expressed Air Force intentions to dominate this field and McMillan's desire to rely on Air Force staffing.

8. We can proceed with a plan to reorganize the NRO staff with more equitable participation, but this leads

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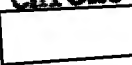
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one immediately to the patchwork of unsymmetrical Programs within the NRO. I submit that a genuine change in NRO as a whole will prove very little more difficult than trying to "shoe-horn" individuals into positions of responsibility.

ALBERT D. WHEELON
Deputy Director
(Science and Technology)

Attachments:
As stated

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